

■ Metro / A15
Fireworks by Bay, aerials to light up metro skies

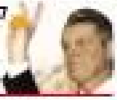
■ Across / A13
Scandal at presidential mansion

■ Lifestyle / C1
Better than tying a string 'round your finger



■ Business / B1
Ecozone investments surged 62% in 2004

■ World / A7
Yushchenko wins Ukraine polls



Cops told: Speak Tagalog when dealing with media



PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Joma warns 2 Akbayan execs they face CPP probe

Estrada arrives in HK for knee surgery



Tsunami toll hits 22,000

Countless bodies piled up on coastlines of South Asia



RP prone to tsunamis, says Phivolcs

Killer waves killed 4,000 in South in '76



World scrambles to help victims

Int'l warning system could have saved lives—scientists

KILLER WAVES REACH AFRICA 5,000 KM AWAY



Second FRONTPAGE

It's the tax collection, stupid

By Carlito Pablo

Senate leaders support Palace plan

By Michael Lim Ubac



Malacañang sees light in gloomy outlook

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr

CAMP CRAME SHOOTOUT

Suspected Abu shot dead after killing cop

By Christian V. Esguerra

Philhealth plans drug vouchers

By Blanche S. Rivera

Gov't austerity program paying off, says Boncodin

Gil Cabacungan Jr

Gov't to block turnover of Journal to Kokoy group

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

We're not a Red front organization, says Pamalakaya

Military belittles NPA threat

By Alcuin Papa



'You want to be a general, get Commander Putol'

By Alcuin Papa

Joma warns 2 Akbayan execs they face CPP probe

LGUs warned on threats of tsunamis

By Volt Contreras



Killer waves killed 4,000 in South in '76

Cops told: Speak Tagalog when dealing with media

Erap's gone for good, says Chavit

Estrada arrives in Hong Kong



Tsunami death toll reaches 22,000

Int'l warning system could have saved lives, say scientists

World scrambles to help victims

RP prone to tsunamis, Phivolcs reminds people

The WORLD

Pro-West Yushchenko wins Ukraine election



SUPPORTERS of opposition presidential candidate Viktor Yushchenko wave national flags ... Independence Square in Kiev, Dec. 26. AFP

Hamas posts solid performance in town elections

Japan may allow female empress



MASAKO

Ex-Taiwan leader heads for Japan, infuriating China

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION



Recurring tragedies

EDITORIAL

TWO recent tragedies—the series of four typhoons that killed 1,060 people and the death in a fire of Speaker Jose de Venecia's youngest daughter—have once again focused attention on two recurring problems. These are deforestation and the inadequacy of firefighting equipment and personnel.

Some people say that deforestation was not the only factor that caused the landslides and floods that killed hundreds of people in Quezon, Aurora, Nueva Ecija, Mindoro and Leyte. But certainly deforestation was one of the major factors, if not the major factor. Deforestation destroyed watersheds on the mountains and deprived them of the capability to hold rainwater. The result was that the huge volume of rain brought by the four successive typhoons came thundering down the mountains, killing hundreds and destroying hundreds of millions of pesos in property and crops.

[illegible]

Recalling in song

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

[illegible]

Touch of class

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

[illegible]

What a year

Political Tidbits



Belinda Olivarez-Cunanan

Proximity and tragedy

At Large



Rina Jimenez-David

A message of hope

Sense and Sensibility



A Pinoy Christmas

Young Blood

Chloe Wong

Notice to Youngblood contributors

They Said

Sharing of risks

Is it really the curriculum?

LETTERS

Suggestions for SSS



Logging is not the problem

Nationwide campaign on fire safety

Second-class citizen

Untapped BIR power, why

Treating public service as a profession

Sincere farewell

Inbox

What are your hopes and dreams for your family this Christmas and New Year?

Across the NATION

Scandal hounds presidential Mansion

'Loaned' ATM cards

Deception

Hurting the President

German fears for life after suspects freed



ROOSTER'S YEAR

String of executions suspected vigilantes' work in Cebu City

Lawyer of German in Boracay killings appeals for more time

NPA rebs vow bigger, more attacks in '05

Chavit confirms raid, but not illegal deals

Text accusations



SINGSON

Foreign firms revive mining bids in North



BODY PAINTING

Army says NPAs killed 65 people in S. Luzon

Australia joins East Asia group of economies, says GMA aide

AFP says NPA plan to use Iraq rebs' weapons 'psy-war'

Belgian couple loses suit vs Baguio Country Club

PNP waxes poetic on reforms, credibility

Fireworks by Bay, aerials light up skies

Man falls to death in well



EXTRA CAREFUL

Price watch in Navotas markets

No revelry for trigger-happy cops on New Year's Eve

Dick Gordon's charity work

ON TARGET



What took Mandaluyong firemen so long?



EZ2 9 29 | SUERTRES 1 5 4 (in exact order) | FOUR DIGIT 4 1 6 4
METRO
MEGALOTTO 6/45 15 16 18 24 28 33 | SWEEPSTAKES
Editor: [illegible] | Assistant Editor: [illegible]

Buses hit house; 1 dead

By Leila B. Salaverria

A NINE-YEAR-OLD boy was killed and 30 others were injured when two buses collided and slammed into a house in Sta. Cruz, Manila, yesterday.

The lone fatality was identified as Jeremiah [illegible] who died while undergoing treatment at the Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center.

Initial reports showed that a Marikina Transit Bus and a minibus bound for Sapang Palay in Bulacan were traveling from opposite directions when they collided at around 1 p.m. on the corner of Felix Huertas and San Lazaro Streets.

The collision also caused the buses to hit a house that doubled as an eatery along Felix Huertas Street.

The injured passengers were rushed to the Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center.

Officer of the day Dr. [illegible] said the [illegible] that the other passengers were conscious and suffered only minor injuries.

Police were able to arrest driver [illegible] and conductor [illegible] of the Marikina Transit Bus, along with [illegible], conductor of the other vehicle.

But the driver of the minibus, who was not readily identified, was able to escape, police added.

The three were brought to the Sta. Cruz police station and were expected to be turned over to the Western Police District Traffic Enforcement Office.



HOLIDAY TREAT
Never out of fashion despite the advent of modern carnival rides, many children still prefer to board carousels like this one at the Enchanted Kingdom in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, during the Christmas season.

MMDA bans waiting sheds on curbs

By Margaux C. Ortiz

KEEP sheds off the curb.

Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Chair Bayani Fernando yesterday issued this warning to barangay officials who were told to refrain from installing waiting sheds on street curbs.

"Apart from causing traffic, this practice is also dangerous," Fernando stressed in a phone interview.

The MMDA chair said he had noticed that barangay officials had been indiscriminately building sheds on street curbs all over the metropolis.

Fernando said these structures should be put up at least 20 meters away from the curb.

"This way people would avoid waiting for and riding in public utility vehicles on this part of the road," he added.

Fernando also stressed that vehicles loading and unloading passengers at the curb could cause traffic jams.

The MMDA chief warned offenders that the agency would remove the illegal structures if they refuse to heed the warning.

No names, please

He also reminded barangay officials to remove signboards and structures bearing their names on the sidewalks.

"Some even put up posts showing the list of officials' names on street corners," Fernando said.

He added, "This is also dangerous because it could slow down traffic and cause accidents."

Fernando said they would not hesitate to remove the structures as part of the MMDA's sidewalk clearing operations all over Metro Manila.

Foul play ruled out in judge's death

By Tina G. Santos

THE CENTRAL Police District Office yesterday ruled out foul play in the death of Judge Alicia Co, 52, who was found lifeless inside the bedroom of her Quezon City home last Sunday.

Supt. Procopio Lipana, chief of the CPD-Criminal Investigation Unit, said that based on their investigation, Co, of Pasig Regional Trial Court Branch 161, could have committed suicide because of depression.

"The victim apparently got depressed after her medical records showed that she had a lingering illness and was in danger of losing her sight," Lipana said.

Co, of Champaca Street, Barangay Roxas District, was found with a bullet wound in her right temple by her sister, Yolanda Jimenez, inside her bedroom around 2 p.m.

Found beside the judge's body was a .38 cal. pistol.

Eye operation

Jimenez earlier said that Co had been complaining about her eyes, which had been operated on three months ago.

The condition of her eyes reportedly continued to bother her long after the operation was over.

Jimenez told police that Co had been depressed over the past few days, prompting her to visit her sister.

Jimenez went straight to Co's room where she found her lifeless body on the bed.

Co's three maids, her house companions, told police they saw the judge leave her room 15 minutes before her body was discovered.

The three, however, claimed they never heard the sound of gunfire.

SPORTS

Editor: Teddyvic S. Melendres

RP LADIES OPEN

Bondad ready for title defense

By Marang R. Castillo

FRANCES Bondad, an Australian-American who is very Filipina at heart, planes in Thursday to defend the Philippine Ladies Open golf crown and with the intent of formally securing Filipino citizenship for the Manila Southeast Asian Games next year.

Born of Filipino parents but holding Australian and American passports, the 17-year-old arrives alone via a Philippine Airlines flight at 5 p.m. before her mother, Julie, follows on Jan. 3, 2005.

Frances missed the chance to represent the country in the World Amateurs last October, but her mother coming over is a sign that all can be ironed out for a smooth representation of the Philippines in the biennial SEAG.

Bondad will actually try to defend another crown, the [illegible] International, while here. It is set Jan. 6, 2005, at Wack Wack.

She then takes on the best amateurs from Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines in the RP Ladies on Jan. 12-14, 2005, at the Manila Golf Club.

Bondad will play in both tournaments as an Australian, but guardian and aunt Cindy Briones has guaranteed that she will be able to convince Julie to appear before the Bureau of Immigration and testify as to her roots.

The World Amateur stint went down the drain when Julie and husband Noel failed to appear before BI secretary Al Fernandez. It was the only remaining requirement the Bondads had to satisfy in order for a passport for Frances to be released.

"I'm sure that Julie would reconsider," Briones said. "We will exhaust all means to be able to secure a Philippine passport for Frances. She's dying to represent her country."

Briones had also asked golf patron Antonio Arevalo for help in Bondad's training expenses leading to the RP Ladies. Arevalo is now trying to book practice rounds at the exclusive Manila Golf Club.

Bondad is asking Arevalo to be able to facilitate at least five practice rounds at Manila Golf to get used to the conditions.

She has little idea of the credentials of the other foreign challengers, but expressed optimism for a successful title defense.

"I didn't play that great [when I] won last year," Bondad said. "I haven't improved [illegible] from last year, but I'm playing more consistently."

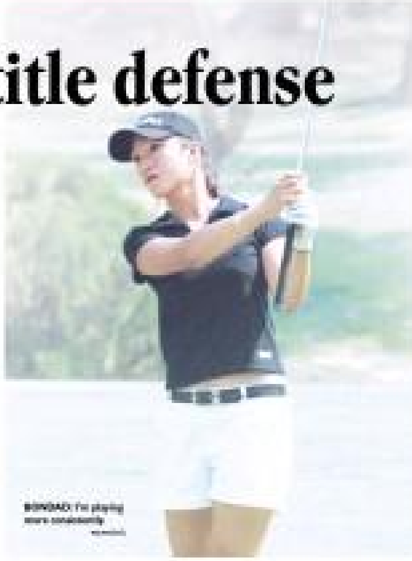
"My chances are as equal as any other player in the field. To me, the course is my toughest competition."

Leading the roster of homegrown bets in the Open are Joyree [illegible], Carmelette Villaroman and Lora [illegible].

The 2005 Open field should easily top a hundred according to WGAP president Nancy Ortiga as ladies chapters of clubs from all over the country are set to send their best players to the annual event.

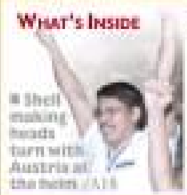
The WGAP has set Thursday, Dec. 30, as the deadline for submission of entries. Interested parties may call 0917-5290324 for details or e-mail wgap71@hotmail.com. Entry forms are available at Manila Golf Club and may be faxed to [illegible].

Ortiga added that the 2005 cast will be a very young roster with a horde of local junior standouts led by promising [illegible] signing up.



BONDAD: I'm playing more consistently

WHAT'S INSIDE

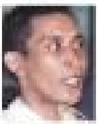


■ Shell making heads turn with Austria at the helm /A18



■ James misses milestone /A19

PSA to fete top jockey, benefactor



DILEMA



ESCUERRA

Shell making heads turn with Austria at the helm



SPORTSWATCH

Emperado rules MCC unrated chess

St. Jude, CCP snare table tennis titles

Pasay 3-cock derby tonight

Helterbrand rises for Brgy. Ginebra



HELTERBRAND

PBA wildcard phase gets wild and wooly

The gift

SPECTATOR



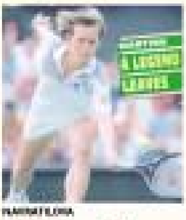
Super Maxi Konica Minolta pulls ahead; 17 yachts quit



James misses milestone but Cavs hang on to win



NFL great White dies after heart attack, 43



NAVRATILOVA

Navratilova competing in Australia

Manning breaks mark for touchdown passes

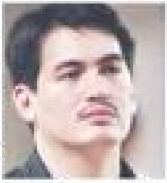


Villanueva powers RCME parbusters

Archers, Dolphins reign supreme



By Jasmine W. Payo



PUMAREN



TOLENTINO

Dominant team

Well-rounded performance

Year of underdogs

BUSINESS

Ecozone investments surged 62% in '04

CURRENCIES



STOCK MARKET

Quiet trading seen



Hotel occupancy up as tourist arrivals rise



Cell phone subscriber growth seen slowing down in 2005

Bullish year for pre-need industry seen

Hotel occupancy up . . .

Quiet trading seen

CURBING FOREX SPECULATION

BSP tightens rules on bank investments in debt

By Doris C. Dumlao

Neda pushes dev't of other export products

By Michelle V. Remo

RP remains keen on oil stockpiling option

By Abigail L. Ho

BIR regulation to bear down on retail trades

RP economic state not as bad as it sounds, says UK envoy



'Fiscal problem'

Confidence

National interest first

Wrong signals

Corruption

With ₱100-M budget, NFA props up sugar prices

Shell acquires 600,000 barrels of oil from Russia

Mindanao's peace weavers



Bishops-Ulama Forum

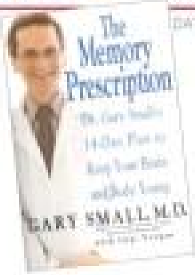
Mindanao Week of Peace

The Peace Weavers

LIFESTYLE

Editor: Chelo Banal-Formoso

Better than tying a string 'round your finger



Aging doesn't have to lead to extensive memory loss, according to Dr. Gary Small

By Linda B. Bolido

DO you have trouble remembering your New Year's resolution?

[illegible]

Gentle on the body, brain

[illegible]

Memory tests

[illegible]

Hidden enemy

[illegible]

"The Memory Prescription" is published by Hyperion, New York. Small has previously written "The Memory Bible: An Innovative Strategy for Keeping Your Brain Young."












'Indian' store opens

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH



Maurice Arcache












Manila's men of distinction

Healthy New Year gift

HEALTHY Options, a natural products store, has an array of gift packages sure to make the New Year happy.

Create one-of-a-kind gifts with premium organic wine boxes, special tea and mug sets, and food packages, among others.

If you can't decide what to give, get Healthy Options Gift Cards in [illegible] denominations. Recipients can use it in any Healthy Options store with its broad selection of healthy organic foods, beverages, and personal care products.

Personalize your own gift bundles. Choose from the store's wide range of nutritious and delicious organic foods, beverages and personal care products. Then, have it packed with the help of Healthy Options' customer assistants.

Among items available at Healthy Options are premium organic wines, available in single- and twin-bottle boxes; special tea-and-mug set at [illegible] each, which comes with selection of Healthy Options' traditional medicinal herb teas; and the Organic Harvest and Natural Gourmet food bundles.



ORGANIC Wine Pack in single bottle made available by Healthy Options. The gift pack also comes in twin bottle pack, which is a perfect gift for the season to liven up the occasion and celebrate in good health.

Visit Healthy Options stores at [illegible].

Visit [illegible] or call Healthy Options at [illegible].



Gifts of caring

WATSONS Personal Care Stores offers unique and affordable holiday gifts and goodies for family and friends.

[illegible], Watsons merchandise director, said the chain has all kinds of gifts, big and small, that will appeal to every Filipino.

Aside from medicines and other personal care products, Watsons also carries an assortment of candies, chocolates, toys, fragrances, cosmetics, Christmas decor and personal care gift sets.

Exclusive beauty collectibles are also available like flashlight, slippers, radio, umbrella, bag, calculator, mug and LCD watches—all priced at only [illegible] each.

Watsons is also selling at [illegible] apiece [illegible] calendars made by artists from Tahanang Walang Hagdanan for the benefit of [illegible] the physically handicapped.

Watsons Personal Care Stores (Phils.) is a joint venture of the [illegible] Group of Co. and Watsons of Hong Kong. It currently has [illegible] stores nationwide and is opening [illegible] more new stores before the end of the year.

Tips for a happy and healthy New Year

INSIDE OUT



Cory Quirino



'Less is more' is the motto that should guide your lifestyle. Less bingeing, more discipline can lead to optimum health

Attracting goodness

The truth about diabetes



MURRAY Sugar Free Cookies

HEALTHY SNACK FOR FEASTING SEASON



LIFESTYLE

You can gain weight even if you exercise

WELL AND GOOD



Tina Juan



Eating mistakes

Exercise mistakes

Right kind of weight gain

Eating habits as important as exercise habits

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Mermaid stretch



Scientific proof of paranormal ignored

INNER AWARENESS



Jaime T. Licauco

Perfect rules

Trickery or deception

Incomplete explanation

There must be something science has not taken into account in its explanation of how the universe works

Gift of health

